

SALARIES FOR WIVES

Property of Johnnie Speer.

SALARIES FOR WIVES

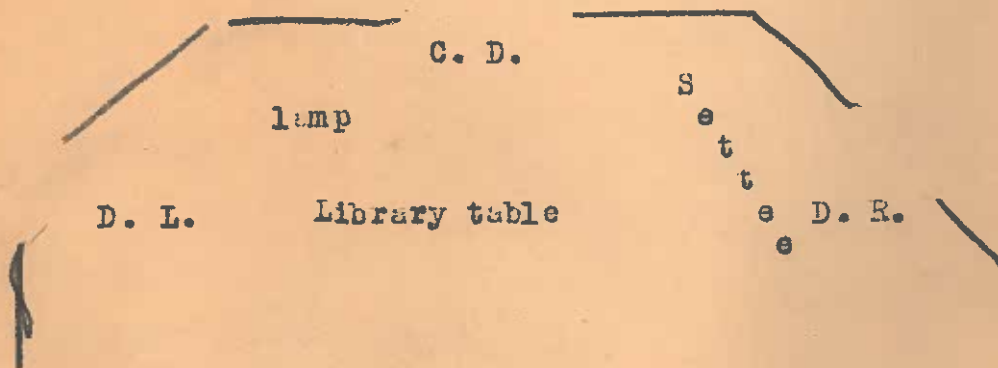
CHARACTERS

Lubrey Bailey Character Comedy
David Willis Lead
Wayne Burley Juvenile
Dad Reyes Comedy Station Agent
Meg Bailey Character
Edith Bailey Lead

PROPS

Settee
Library table
Two straight chairs
Dish and spoon
Cigar Tray
Old cigar stubs
Broom
Lots of newspapers
Dosen empty beer bottles
Floor lamp

SETTING



SALARIES FOR WIVES.

Aubrey Bailey

(enters R. He is a rather sporty old man of fifty, slightly red nosed)
Meg! Meg! I'm going to take a little stroll down town. Anything you want me to get?

Meg

(off L.) No but wait a minute I want to see you. (enters L.) Aubrey
I---(looks at him hesitatingly)

Aubrey

Well, what is it, dear?

Meg

I----(plays with the button on his coat)

Aubrey

(impatiently) Well, come on tell me. I've got to be going.

Meg

(suddenly) I want a dollar.

Aubrey

(shocked) What! A dollar? Good Lord, woman, what do you think I am---a bank?

Meg

Oh, Aubrey, haven't you got a dollar?

Aubrey

Of course I've got one. What do you want with it? Didn't I give you fifty cents last week?

Meg

Last week, yes.

Aubrey

Woman, you're gettin' too extravagant. What do you want with the money?

Meg

Oh, Aubrey, you know today is the day our daughter get's married.

Aubrey

Well, what of it? Just because Edith is going to get married is no reason why I should give you a dollar, is it?

Meg

But, Aubrey, she and David leave tonight on their honeymoon.

Aubrey

Still I ask you why should I give you a dollar?

Meg

Well, I want to buy some little things for Edith to put in her suitcase. (turns away half crying) Oh go on down town, you don't have to give me the dollar.

Aubrey

Well, don't cry, old woman. Here! (digs out a dollar and hands it to her) Now don't ask me for any more money this month.

Edith

(enters with David C.) Oh mother you should have seen it. It is the most glorious thing you ever saw.

Meg

You mean your bungalow, Edith?

Edith

Yes, David and I were just over there. Oh I can hardly wait until we get back from our honeymoon and settle down to live in it.

David- Aubrey

Well, daughter, after you've been married a few years the newness will all wear off.

David

Oh no it won't. Mr. Bailey, ours is going to be the ideal marriage.

Aubrey

Yeh, that's what I thought, but wait until you get "dunned" every

morning for a dollar!

Edith

Well for crying out loud, father, did mother have to get down on her knees and beg your to give her some money again.

Aubrey

Beg me! Why that woman has just been spending money like I was a millionaire lately. Now I ask you how do you ever expect me to be a success in life when I've got a spendthrift for a wife.

Edith

Father, mother hasn't had a decent dress to wear in years.

Aubrey

Dress----why just last summer, she bought a sport outfit. Son't talk to me, Edith. You're just like your mother. David, you're marrying my daughter, and she's a good girl, but if you take my advice you won't let her get started spending money the way her ma has.

Meg

(hands him the dollar quietly) Here, Aubrey. (puts it in his hand)

Aubrey

Huh. What's that for?

Meg

I've decided I don't want the money. I---I'll get along without it.

Aubrey

Now that's sensible---Meg---that's the way I like to hear you talk. (starts to pocket money)

Edith

Wait a minute, dad. (takes money from him) Here mother. That's yours. (hands it back to her mother)

Aubrey

Edith---what the---how dare you?

Edith

Now, dad, you leave mother alone. Don't be so stingy.

Aubrey

Oh you two are going to break me! I'll never be a success. (starts out)

David

Are you going to town? Mr. Bailey?

Aubrey

Yes?

David

I'll drive you down in my car if you'll wait awhile.

Barley

No I haven't time to wait while you chin with Edith. Thanks. (exits C.)

Edith

Mother, why did you give that dollar back to dad?

Meg

Oh, Edith, it just hurts your father so much to lose money---

Edith

What have I told you about making him give you money for the things you want?

Meg

I know but it's a lot easier to talk about that than it is to do it. (exits R.)

Edith

Poor old mother. She's slaved all of her life to make a home for dad, and yet he hollers his head off if she asks him for a dollar. Honestly, David, if I thought you were going to be like that there would be no wedding bells for us today.

David

David

Listen, Edith, our wedding life is going to be one long dream of happiness. Dear, are you already for our trip tonight?

Edith

Yes, mother has been packing my things.

David

And, dear, I'm going to order on tickets and we're going to have a private drawing room on the train, dear, and do you know what I'm going to have them do?

Edith

What?

David

I'm going to have them get us a drawing room where the moonlight shows through the windows.

Edith

Oh won't that be lovely?

David

Think of it. Our honeymoon! The train rumbling along, and just you and I sitting in a cozy little window watching the world passed by drenched in moonlight.

Wayne Burley

(enters C.) Excuse me I knocked on the door.

Edith

Oh well just walk right on in, Wayne.

Wayne

That's what I did. Well, today's the day. David, I'm here to offer you my heart felt sympathy.

David

Why---because I'm going to get married.

Wayne

Yes---because you're going to get murdered---I mean married.

Edith

Oh Wayne Burely, it's about like you to stand around and make fun of marriage.

David

You simp, don't you realize that marriage is a sacred institution

Wayne

Well, who the devil wants to live in an institution. Naw sir, marriage is all right for them that want solitary confinement but for me---no siree! I believe in looking at the wrecks along the seashore before I order myself a sailor suit. After all, freedom is rather nice. You can just come and go as you please. And a life is so expensive a terrible handicap for a young chap just starting out in life. (they start to speak) Sure I know. Two can starve as cheap as one---

David

Oh go on with that chatter. Why look at me for instance. Here I am with just a few thousand dollars in the bank. Well I've got a little ~~00000~~ fruit canning factory. Now that I'm married to Edith, she will be an incentive for me to work harder and make my little factory a great big canning industry. Why knows but what my little cannery will make a big city out of this little old dead burg?

Wayne

Yes, yes, who knows? Well, I wish you luck. You know me, David. You know me too, Edith.

Edith

Yes, Wayne I know you!

Wayne

Where's your mother, Edith? I've come to collect the last premium

on your father's insurance policy. I met him up town and he told me gave the money to your mother because he expected me to call at the house, and he wanted the money there when I called.

Edith

She's in the other room go on in.

Wayne

(half sarcastic) Yes, don't let me disturb you two love birds (exits).

David

Darn that guy. He makes me sore always joking about marriage. I know what's the matter with him, Edith. He's sore because you turned him down to marry me.

Edith

Now don't get jealous of Wayne, David. I would trade you off for a million like him. And some day when you have made your little factory the great canning industry that you say you're going to, you can give him the merry ha ha!

Dad Keyes

(enters C. all excited. He is the village station master) Hey! Hey! David is it so? Is it so?

David

Is what so, Dad Keyes?

Dad

I heered the folks talkin' that you and Edith was goin' on your honeymoon and was goin to reserve a drawing room on the Limited.

David

You bet your life we are.

Dad

Whew! Lordee, my hearts jest a poundin'. Son, do you know I've been the station agent for most nigh forty years here and that's the secon drawing room reservation I ever got. Where you going go go?

David

We're going up in the NorthWoods of Maine to camp out.

Dad

Say aint that great. That'll be a big ticket. Cost you some money. Well, I'll be down to the station ---and I'll sure give you service. (puffs) Oh I'm all excited. This will be the first ticket anybody's bought for almost two weeks.

David

Listen, now do you know the kind of a drawing room I want?

Dad

What kind?

David

I want one where there's plenty of moonlight shining in through the window.

Dad

Moonlight! Hmmm. (strokes chin) Did you say moonlight or moonshine.

David

Moonlight! This is our honeymoon and we've got to have moon light.

Dad

Well, I'll do the best I can. I go down to the station and look into this weighty matter at once. (exits C.)

Edith

Poor old Dad Keyes. I'll bet he's never had so much excitement since the Civil War.

David

~~Just-think~~ Everybody is excited over our marriage.

Edith

Yes, everybody smiles and they are all so friendly to you when you are about to be married. Oh what a wonderful thing marriage is!

Meg
(enters crying R. followed by Wayne) Oh, Edith! Edith! Think what your father's done? Oh this is the end. This is the end.

Edith
Mother what is it?

Meg
(sobbing violently) Oh I can't bear it. I can't bear it.

Edith
What's the matter?

Wayne
Well, Edith, your father hasn't paid the last four installments on his insurance policy.

Meg
And to boot the old reprobate has borrowed \$500 cash on the policy.

Edith
Oh no!

Meg
Oh yes!

Edith
Don't cry mother. Please don't.

Aubrey
(enters C.) What's the matter? What's the matter? Did you pay
ooooooooooooo Wayne that money, ma.

Meg
Yes, but I didn't pay him for the last four installments that you didn't pay, and I didn't pay him for the fifteen hundred you borrowed on the policy.

Aubrey
(looking at W.) What'd you tell her that for?

ne
Well, I didn't it was a secret. I'm just an insurance agent
I'm not supposed to know anything.

Edith
Father, is that? You've used up fifteen hundred dollars of
your endowment? Why?

Aubrey
Well, what if we?

Edith
Why, Popper, it's the only money you've ever saved for a rainy day.
What in the world'd you do with it?

Aubrey
Never mind we'll do with it.

h
You think you're perfectly right to take that money and spend it
and yet you head off if mother spends a dollar foolishly.

ay
Well, it's my money.

Edith
No more than it was Mother's.

Aubrey
I'm the one who earned it!

Edith
No more than Mother did. Hasn't she worked for you and kept house for you? What do you think you'd have to pay for all she's done for you for the last twenty five years? Why even at servant's wages, you owe mother thousands of dollars.

Aubrey
Your mother isn't a servant.

Edith
No, if she had of been, she would have been paid for all of her hard work.

Meg
Oh don't say any more, Edith. Not here before everybody. I was never more ashamed in my life. (exits in R.)

Edith
(indignant) Poor mother---she's just worked and worked all these year---and what has she had? Nothing!

Aubrey
She's had me!

Edith
Well, that's nothing. Oh dear, we're in a terrible fix. Wayne, can't you fix it so Popper won't lose what's left on that policy? You're the insurance company's lawyer---

Wayne
(doubtfully) I know, but---

Edith
Do try---for my sake.

David
Well listen, Wayne, if you can't fix I'll pay that fifteen hundred so he won't lose it.

Wayne
Well I'll see. (exits C.)

Edith
Oh dear I must go in and try to comfort poor mother. (exits R.)

Aubrey
(scratching head) Son, I'm tellin' you things is just naturally in a hell of a mess. 1

David
(smiling) Listen, you old sport, what did you do with that money? Have you lost it playing stud poker?

Aubrey
I should say not. It aint near so bad as ma is ravin' on carryin' on. The fact of the matter is, I've invested it.

David
Invested it?

Aubrey
Listen, I've got the greatest chance in the world to become a great man. Why if what I've got on my mind turns out right I'll be one of the richest men in the country.

David
Tell me. I'm going to be your son-in-law.

Aubrey
Well you remember the old trolley company we used to have in this town. Well, I bought \$80,000 worth of the old trolley company's bonds for ten cents on the dollar.

David
But the company is busted!

Aubrey
But it's old power house still stands and I've got a tip the new electric light company is thinking of buying it. If it does, don't you see that I've got a fortune.

David
And you've got the \$80,000 worth of bonds?

Aubrey
No, I've only got \$1500 invested in them, but if I could just get \$6500 I could buy them all and then I would have complete control.

David
Say do you know that's a great idea at that.

Aubrey
Sure it is. It's going to make me successful. If I only had the rest of those bonds!

David
Listen, old man, I've got seven thousand dollars that I

was planning on sinking into my own business. I'll let you have the other \$6500. That shows you the faith I've got in your scheme.

Aubrey

Do you mean it? Give me your hand! (delighted) David, I'm proud of you. Listen, I want to tell you the truth. ~~At~~ I didn't approve of you at first----thought my daughter was making a big mistake -----but I was wrong! I apologize! (embracing him) Welcome--- welcome into the Bailey family. Could you let me have the money Now?

***** NUMBER ONE *****

Aubrey

(enters C. listens at door R. X's to door) You still cryin', Ma?

Meg

No---n--no, Aubrey. (cries)

Aubrey

Well I didn't think you were.

Edith

(enters R. with her mother, they are very stern faced) Pa, we've just had a talk. Father, today is my wedding day, but before I can feel content to become a wife, I want you and mother to settle this income question. Before I leave home today, I want you to promise that every Saturday after you've paid your weekly expenses whatever's left you'll divide equally with Mother.

Aubrey

What---do you think I'm crazy?

Edith

(going to him) You've never been fair with Mother about money. You've had everything; your poker games---your cigars---your holiday fishing trips! Twice in the last five years you've gone to Atlantic City for the Redmen's Convention---but you didn't take Mother.

Aubrey

I'm the Redman---not your mother.

Edith

Yes, you've been everything.

Wayne

(knocks on C. door and then enters) Hello, did you say "come in"?

Edith

No, but I see that you are in.

Wayne

Well, old sport, (slaps Aubrey on back) I've got it fixed up with the insurance company.

Aubrey

Fine, Wayne. I appreciate that. Wayne, I'm glad you came in, I'll walk down town with you. My charming daughter and wife was just giving me hail Columbia when you came in.

Edith

(grabs him by sleeve and turns him around) Well, don't think I'm through with you either. It's the truth. You've run around all of your life. You were always at some lodge meeting or snake dance or something, while Mother sat around home watching the stove in case you wanted some supper when you came in.

Aubrey

Do you hear that, Wayne? Really, what's the use of a fellow trying to be unselfish?

Meg

Of course, Edith, you know your father has always been the livest wire in Johnsburg.

Edith

Well, I think it's your turn to be a live wire. (

(to Aubrey) And that's why I'm asking you to pay her a definite salary instead of making her come to you like a beggar for every penny she gets.

Wayne

Well, most wives have to ask their husbands for money and I've noticed that they don't stutter much.

Edith

There isn't a wife in the world who wouldn't sooner have less money to spend if only she knew it was her own and she could do what she liked with it without answering those everlasting questions: "What do you want it for" and "what did you do with the last I gave you"

Aubrey

I tell you women aren't to be trusted with the handling of money.

Edith

No, but it's perfectly all right for you to be trusted with money and to throw it away---just throw it away. I say and I always will say that every wife has a right to a part of what her husband makes.

Aubrey

Just for taking care of a home?

Edith

Yes, and for keeping her husband amused and seeing that things are smooth and pleasant. For watching over his health and his children's health, and nursing him and for trying to get him the things he likes to eat ---over---a thousand meals a year!

Aubrey

(laughing) Housework! Women make a lot of fuss about it but it isn't anything, really.

Meg

It isn't anything. I wish you had to do it! Oh there's no use arguing, Edith, it's the same old story---a husband's a relative and it don't pay to work for relatives.

Edith

(putting arms on father's shoulders) Now, father won't you---won't you admit that mother is entitled to a part of what you make?

Aubrey

I will not.

Edith

And you won't agree to divide with her?

Aubrey

No! (turns back on her)

Edith

Well, then we'll have to do it, Mother. Let him shift for himself for awhile!

Meg

Oh, Edith, no---I can't do it.

Edith

This is your last chance mother. If you're ever going to take a stand it's got to be now.

Aubrey

(pulling Edith around by the shoulders) Look here, Edith what do you think you're doing?

Meg

Don't you start to scolding Edith.

Aubrey

What!

Meg

She's right in everything she says. She knows how I've worked and worked for you and you don't appreciate it. You say it's nothing.

Aubrey

And I meant what I said!

Meg

Well then if it's nothing, I might just as well stop doing it.

Aubrey

(shocked) Do you really mean to say that after twenty five years of peaceful married life, you'd let our daughter come along and upset everything with her craz yideas.

Edith

They're not silly. If you want to make crazy investments and waste half the money you ought to save, that's your business. But the other half belongs to mother and I'm going to help her stand up for her rights.

Wayne

(coming down. He has been watching all of this with amusement) Why Edith I'm surprised at you making trouble like this between your parents.

Edith

Listen, Monkey, who pulled your chain? This is none of your business Stay out!

Aubrey

Leave him alone. I don't blame Wayne for being shocked. I am too. This is a fine thing you've started.

Edith

Well, now that I've started it, I mean to see it through.

Wayne

I don't what David will do when he marries you, but if you were my wife--

Edith

Well, I--don't worry, Analgesic Balm, I'll never be your wife, so don't lose any sleep about what you'd do if I were.

Aubrey

Aw, there aint no use arguin' with these women, Wayne. Come on in the kitchen, old fella, and we'll have a little drink to celebrate my return to batchelor life.

Edith

Then that's the understanding popper---everything is over between you and mother until you come to your senses.

Aubrey

All right let her go. This is my house, I paid for it. You can just get out. I'll run the house. There's nothing she does I can't learn to do in a day. Who are all the best cooks in the world any way?

Wayne

Why men of course. And say, old man, I'll move in with you now that you're going to be a batchelor. Gosh, think of the card parties you can have! Stay out as late as you like!

Jim Aubrey

(grinning at Meg) You bet and I never knew a strike yet when you couldn't find a few strike breakers! (they both laugh) Come On, Wayne. (they exit singing) Oh two jolly old batchelors are we!(ex t)

Meg

Oh do you hear that, Edith. That old devil's tickled to death to have me leave. I'm got going to do it. It would give him too much satisfaction. Oh that old razor backed hog! (cries)

Edith

Now, Mother, you told him you'd leave and you've got to. Listen, I'll postpone our honeymoon, and we'll go and live in my cottage. Just you and I and David. Mother, and it won't be any time at all before dad 'll weaken. Now you stop crying and go and get ready to leave. I'll see David and tell him the honeymoon is off. I know it will break his heart, because he was so set on it, but we've got to break father at all costs.

and I can all move into our little cottage to day---and won't every body be surprised?

David

You and Mother and I---do you really mean to say that you'd let a silly little parcel of your mother's interference---

Edith

It isn't silly or little! It's a lot bigger than where we spend our honeymoon. Oh I know how you've set your heart on this trip, but won't you do this for me?

David

It isn't for you! It's just this idea of money that your father and mother ought to settle between them. It's for that that you want to take all the romance and beauty out of our wedding.

Edith

Oh, David, you dreamer. Why don't you be practical once in awhile? Romance and Beauty, do they depend on the place we go to. Very well then if they do, and if you've got your heart set on this romantic honeymoon of yours then we'll just have to postpone the wedding until we can go!

David

(going to her) what! You're only saying that to try and force me to give in?

Edith

(half crying) No I'm not. I mean it!

David

If you really love me, you'll prove it by going to Maine with me this afternoon.

Edith

I can't, David. I've given Mother my word.

David

(turning away) I see! (turns back to her sharply) Your mother ought to be ashamed of herself to suggest such a thing.

Edith

Don't you dare say a word against my mother; She didn't suggest it. I suggested it and if you don't like it you don't need to marry me.

David

You don't love me.

Edith

Yes, I do!

David

Then I won't let you make our marriage into the kind of a thing you're trying to.

Edith

You won't let me! You talk as if this trip meant more to you than I do. Very well then since we can't go we'd better break off our engagement until you come to your senses.

David

You wouldn't dare!

Edith

(getting her hat) Oh wouldn't I?

David

Where are you going?

Edith

To the church to tell the minister.

David

(catching her roughly) Edith, you don't know what you are doing!

Edith

Yes I do. (starts)

Aubrey

(enters R. with a glass of brandy in his hands smiling)(little drunk)
Hello---David. When's the weddin' comin' off today?

Edith
The wedding isn't coming off today. I'm on the way to see the minister to postpone the wedding.

Aubrey
Why, Edith---you're going to give up David?

Edith
There's nothing else to do. (exits crying)

Aubrey
Well, boy, that's too bad.

David
She doesn't love me.

Aubrey
Aw---yes she does.

David
No she doesn't and I love her so much. I can't live without her.

Aubrey
Listen, son, I'm a bachelor now myself. You can come and live with me and Wayne---we'll have a regular bachelor's hall here, and---

David
Nothing doing. I'm going out and bury myself. That's what I'm going to do.

Dad Keyes
(enters C.) Well, I got 'em David---I'm already for your honeymoon. Now listen, I've got you a drawing room with moonlight as far as Kansas City! After that you'll either have to go to sleep or else move over to the other side of the train!

***** NUMBER TWO *****

(Close in)

Wayne
(Enters R. and begins picking up beer bottles and cigar ashes. The stage has been all littered up. A pack of cards is on the table. Things are a terrible wreck.) Oh Lord! What a mess! (X's to R.) Hey, Aubrey, you old toper, come on out here and help me clean up

Aubrey
Aw---don't bother me. My head aches! (off stage)

Wayne
Well, what of it? So does mine.

Aubrey
(enters looking very much the worse for wear) Wehw! Wayne, what what kind of home brew was we drinkin' last night any way?

Wayne
That was some home-brew, wasn't it? Look at all these bottles. (he has them stacked on the table)

Aubrey
Did I drink all of that?

Wayne
Well, don't let any body kid you. You had your share of it! Well, how do you like being an old bachelor, eh?

Aubrey
Oh it's great! Let's see I've been a single man for a week, haven't I?

Wayne
A whole week. Listen, don't let anybody kid you---you'll be seein' your wife come over here and just start right in to work just like nothing had happened.

Aubrey
I wish she'd come over now and clean up the house. But I won't give in to her, Wayne. No sir, I won't give in to her! Oh my head.

Wayne
You know, Aubrey, you've got to treat women with coldness. If they ever think that anything they do affects you then that gives them too much pleasure. Now take that fool David he's been moping around as though his heart was broken, and he'd never get over it. Well that's just what Edith wants him to do. She wants him to miss her.

Aubrey
Well believe me I aint givin' my old lady any satisfaction. I pass her on the street and just smile as if I was havin' the time of my life. And listen, Wayne, if that deal of mine with Electric Light Company turns out right, I'll be one of the richest men in this part of the country.

Wayne
Then she'll wish she'd never left you.

Aubrey
Yeh, won't she now. (looks out window) Look here comes David now.

Wayne
(looking) Yes, and he looks like an accident going somewhere to happen.

David
(enters C.) 'lo.

Wayne
Hello, yourself. Why the long face?

David
Who wouldn't have a long face? If the only woman you'd ever loved in your life left, you would you be glad about it?

Aubrey
Listen, David, don't you know that's just what Edith wants you to do?

David
Just what she wants me to do?

Aubrey
Yeh, she wants you to look all in and dejected like. She wants you to miss her. Shucks, do you think I'm lettin' my old woman think I need her?

Wayne
Well you really haven't missed her, have you?

Aubrey
Well, now there are times, Wayne, when every man feels the need of a woman. That supper we had last night tasted like charcoal.

Wayne
What of it? We 'll soon learn to cook better than they ever could?

Aubrey
Nope, we never could get to be as good as my wife.

David
See there! That's just what I said. You'd miss your wife after she was gone. You know good and well you do, Aubrey, and you just won't admit it.

Aubrey
Well what of it? I'm not lettin' them find it out. And listen, David, think of when that Electric light company decides to buy the old power house. That's when you and me will be settin' on easy street.

Wayne
I'll say. I wish I had some money in on that deal.

David
Oh what's money? Money doesn't bring love nor happiness to you, and that's what I want. You two make me sick!

Dad Hayes
(enters C.) Hello---boys. How's everything?

Wayne

Pretty good. How's everything at the station.

Dad

Oh jest fine. The trains been comin' in jest right on the dot. Lots of talk around the town. They jest can't get over your wife leavin' you, Mr. Bailey.

Aubrey

Yeh, what are the folks saying about it?

Dad

Well there was some pretty lively bettin' about it up at prayer meetin' last night. Some said it was because you had another woman---some said it was poker and drink. Gene Powell says your wife left you because you wouldn't give her half of your wages.

Aubrey

Well 'spose it were---would you give your wife half your wages?

Dad

Should say I would!

Aubrey

You would!

Dad

Sure! My wife takes all mine!

David

Well I can't stand to hear you buzzards make fun of marriage so I'm going. See you again ---Aubrey, you haven't heard anything about that power house deal, have you?

Aubrey

No---they had a committee meeting, the new Electric Company did and they were decide whether they'd buy the power- old power house ~~1000000000000000~~ or build a new one. Of course they'll buy the old one, they wouldn't build a new one.

Dad

The heck they aint---Aubrey, that's partly in fact wholly what brung me over here. I just took a telegram to the newspaper and it said that the town was going to have a new electric plant---

Aubrey

What---they decided not to buy the old power house---huh?

Dad

Guess they won't if they build a new one. Well, so long boys, I got to be going.

David

Why, Aubrey, that means all that money we invested is gone---

Aubrey

(dropping down in chair) That's the way it's been all my life--- whenever I bet on 'em they start runnin' backwards.

Wayne

Good gosh, that doesn't mean you're clear flat broke, does it?

Aubrey

Yes---I'm broke---busted! Haven't got so much as a thin dime.

David

That means I'll lose my fruit cannery. I put in every dime I had on that deal.

Aubrey

David, I'm sorry---Honest to Lor' I am---you oughtn't to have done it, I--

David

That's all right, Aubrey---you meant all right---It's just too bad for both of us.

Aubrey

I'll be the laugh of the town now. I've talked so much about all that I was going to do.

David

So have I. Everybody's been laughing and talking about me any way. Every where I go ---I see them whispering---"There goes David Carter His- He was going to get married but Edith Bailey jilted him" I'm leavin' town tonight. I'm going somewhere--where everybody I see don't know me---(starts)

Aubrey

Wait a minute, David---I'm going up town---my head aches I've got to get a bromo-seltzer, and then maybe I'll leave town with you. David, I've got my choice of doin' either two things--- you know?

David

What do you mean?

Aubrey

I can either leave town or get damn good and drunk---and as I kinda hate to travel something tells me I'm going to get tight. (exit C.) (with David)

Wayne

Gee, that's tough on those two birds. I guess I'd better follow them down town to see that they don't committ suicide. (exits C.)

Meg

(after a short pause enters R followed by Meg) I tell you, Edith, I simply had to come here and see how the house was.

Edith

Oh but, Mother, you took an awful chance. Father is just likely to come in any minute and see you here, and then he'll think you've given it up and are coming back to him.

Meg

No, if he sees me I'll tell him I came to get a night gown that belonged to me. But, Oh, Edith, look at this room! It's a sight. (sits down in chair wearily) Edith, it's a failure. Look at us! We've been trying all week to get a job. We can't live on nothing. We're paying old Farmer Powell eight dollars a week board and room. What will we do when we've used up what little money you had in that tin back of yours?

Edith

Oh I don't know. I thought it would be easier to get a job than it is. But to give in! I wouldn't dream of giving in. Just think how they'd grow over us. I wish I had something I could pawn---

Meg

Oh it's terrible. Edith, look at them beer bottles/ I'll bet that old sot's been goofy eyed drunk ever since I left him. (begins looking) all around the floor)

Edith

Mother, what in the world are you looking for?

Meg

Hairpins---I don't see any. Now that all the girls wear bobbed hair a wife's lost one more protection. Oh I tell you, Edith, if I ever find a hairpin or blonde hair in this house---I'll be a widow for right---and you'll be buying flowers for your father's funeral.

Edith

Oh, Mother. I think you can trust father.

Meg

Sure you can when you've got both eyes on him. (sits down and begins to cry) Oh I'm sick of it. I feel just like a piece of toast after the poached eggs' been lifted off of it.

Edith

But, Mother, I'll bet Dad's just as lonely and sick of it as you are

Meg

Lonely. Don't make me laugh. Look at those poker chips---and those home-brew bottles. Oh they've been havin' a wild time all right---kicked the board's right out of their stalls.

Edith
Poor David! I saw him on the street and he actually looked tragic.

Meg
Edith, you'll just have to admit it's pretty hard to get along without some one you care a whole lot about. Honestly, don't you wish you had your David?

Edith
Of course I do, but I'm not going to him until he comes to his senses. Do you think I'd marry him and then have to beg him for money like you do dad? No sir, not me.

Meg
Well, your father was all right---anyway I loved him---the old devil!
Dad Keyes
(off C.) Steady now! Be careful!

Wayne
Don't let him fall dad.

Edith
Oh listen they're coming back. We mustn't let them see us here.

Meg
(up to window) Oh great mercy---Edith---they're carrying your pa in. He's been hurt!

Edith
Oh mother!

(they enter carrying Aubrey he is flat drunk. Dad Keyes has hold of his feet and Wayne has a hold of his head. They bring him in and are looking for a place to put him)

Aubrey
(chattering drunkenly) I tell you---thash awful stuff! Funniest stuff I ever drank! Hic!

Meg
Oh the old devil's drunk.

Aubrey
Is that voices I hear? Oh help! My stomach's trying to climb up in my throat. (gags)

Meg
Oh looks he's suffering. Lay him there on the sofa. (they lay him down) Oh just look at him.

Dad Keyes
Don't get excited Ma'am, he jest come down to the station and said he wanted something strong to drink. I fix'd up a little drink of my own private stock---and he took two big gulps of it---and it just coal cocked him.

Wayne
I never saw a man get drunk so quick.

Aubrey
Drunk? Who's drunk? Somebody get drunk? Who was it?
Wayne
Why you're drunk.

Aubrey
You're another---I am not. I'm not drunk! Don't tell me!

Meg
(down on her knees rubbing his head) Oh dear---I'll bet he's been poisoned by the horrible li'our.

Aubrey
(squints his eyes and tries to see) Whose that rubbin' my head?

Meg
It's me, Aubrey dear.

Aubrey
By golly---Wayne---you're right---I am drunk! Meg says she's home and I know darn well she's lying cause she left

me and said she wasn't coming back till I got my sense. Meg, what you doin' in my house. Get out of here. How dare you come back to haunt me woman.

Meg

All right---I---I'll go---I---I just came over a night gown, and then I thought you were sick, but you're not you're just drunk that's all your good for. Good bye***--(exits C. sobbing)

Aubrey

(raises up a little bit) Shew! Lordee! I was sick. (looks around dazed) Has the old woman gone?

Wayne

Yes.

Aubrey

Good! You---you see I didn't want her to find out---

Edith

Find out---what dad?

Wayne

Edith, your father's broke---he and David invested all their money in that old Trolley company bonds and they new electric light company is going to build a new power plant instead of buying the old one like they thought they would.

Edith

Oh then---my David has lost all of his money too?

Aubrey

We've both lost, but it's all right I didn't your mother to find it out. Never let her know what a fool I was. (holds head) Oh my head. Dad Keyes, what kind of li our did you give me to drink?

Dad

You know that stuff did work awful funny on you, didn't it?

Aubrey

Funny! Why it just pulled my stomach clear up through my head.

Dad

Now, that's funny. I've got to figure on that. You know I've seen that stuff burn a hole through wood, and all of that but I've been drinkin' it for years and it never done me that way.

Edith

Where's David?

Wayne

He's gone to pack his things. He's leaving today on the train. You see he's lost everything. The money he lost on that deal was the only capital he had for his canning factory, so that means he loses it---David's a wreck.

Aubrey

Well I'm a pretty bad collision myself.

Edith

Oh I must go find David.

Wayne

What for?

Edith

Because I'm going to marry him.

Wayne

Marry him?

Edith

Yes, he's in trouble and he'll need me. (exits C.)

Wayne

Well be dadgummed. Aint women funny!

Aubrey

A woman, my boy, is a funny ani-mule--- a funny ani-mule! (holds head) Oh my head!

Dad

(stroking chin whiskers) Say I've got it a ll thought out.

Aubrey
What have you got thought out?

Dad
I know what made you so sick.

Aubrey
What was it?

Dad
I always keep my whiskey in the medicine cabinet, and must have got it mixed up with Sloane's Liniment!

***** NUMBER THREE *****

(Edith and Meg enter C.)

Edith
I guess father has gone up town.

Meg
I hope so. I want to have the house all fixed up for him when he comes in. Do you suppose he's over his sick spell?

Edith
Of course. Father's got a good constitution. Where shall I put these empty beer bottles?

Meg
(has taken a broom and is sweeping and straightening up the room)
Put them in the kitchen.

Edith
All right. (exits R.)

Wayne
(enters C.) Well, what's all of this mean?

Meg
It mean I've come back to my husband.

Wayne
Hurrah for our side!

Meg
Well, don't think, Wayne Surbey, that for a minute I'd of ever done it if he hadn't lost all of his money. I've been with him through thick and thin all of these years, but when he has to suffer being poverty stricken I share the fate with him.

Wayne
I don't suppose you'd have come back to him if he'd of made alot of money would you?

Meg
Nope! Then he wouldn't have needed me. He could have hired servants.

Wayne
I suppose Edith is going to marry David now.

Meg
She is if she ever finds him. She's been looking for him ever since she found out he was broke. (has lot of papers and clutter) Dear me you men just ruined this house. (exits as Edith is coming in R?)
Look out, Edith, don't make me drop this clutter.

Edith
All right, Mother. (she busies herself straightening furniture)
Haven't seen David, have you?

Wayne
Nope---he's probably mooning and glooming around some where. Edith, is it honest time you're going to marry him now?

Edith
If he wants me---and will have me.

Wayne
But he hasn't a dime not a penny.

Edith
That's why I'm marrying him now.

Wayne
Gee. I never will be able to understand women. Edith, did you know that I've got a nice little sum of money in the bank?

Edith
(keeping right on with her work) That's fine. Every man should have a nice sum of money in the bank.

Wayne
You know, Edith, I'd make a good husband, don't you think?

Edith
Never can tell.

Wayne
I'd give my wife all the money she needed, she could do as she pleased and I've got seven thousand in the bank.

Edith
Just keep right on and you'll have ten thousand.

Wayne
(catching her by the arm) Edith, I always did love you---you're old man's in need of money---and now---

Edith
(stopping), are you proposing to me?

Wayne
Uh huh.

Edith
You want me to be your wife, do you? Well do you know what the answer to that riddle is?

Wayne
No--

Edith
That's it!

Wayne
You mean won't have me?

Edith
No, Wayne---I love David---and no one else. I'm sorry I'll be a sister to you.

Wayne
Heck no I've got to many sisters already.

Edith
Well I'm sorry. Don't bother me any more. Mother and I want everything already for old dad when he comes in. We want to surprise him.
(exits R.)

Wayne
Shoot! What's the use! What's the use!

Aubrey
(enters C.) Hello---Wayne---why you lookin' so blue.

Wayne
Aw nothin'.

Aubrey
I'm the only one that ought to look blue. Do you know, Wayne, I've just got wise to myself. I've just found out I'm a great big wonderful zero. But as long as Meg was here I never knew it. Wayne, that's where I didn't figure this wife business right. Pay 'em? Gee, you couldn't give 'em too much for bein' the one person in the world who really believes in you.

Wayne
Gosh, you're spoutin' mush, old man.

Aubrey
Mush is it? Huh! Listen---I guess perhaps---big successful men don't need their wives---I don't know---but, God, how we poor dubs need 'em! We I a nobody at the office---and afraid to ask for a raise for fear the boss will notice my name on the pay roll and

fire me. But when there's a wife in the affier you're settin' differnt I tell you. At home you're the boss---and wife's there to take care that everyone knows it. Maybe the kid asks some questions about her school work---a question you couldn't answer on a bet---but your wife says, "Don't bother father, he's had a hard day at the office and he's got a lot on his mind." Probably you're only sitting there wondering what chance the Yanks have got to win the pennant, but you look wise and you know that to the little gang around the reading lamp you're somebody---and somehow or other you begin to feel like somebody. (takes out hankie and wipes eyes) I---I don't care Wayne I miss my wife---and I wish to Lord I had me a mess of her corned beef and cabbage.

158

(enters E. in house apron smiling, she hold a dish and s. con)
 Hubray, dear, your dinner's ready.

кѹбѣу

He---Meg!

Log

Come on. It's ^{hog} corned beef and cabbage.

Aubrey

Reg, you don't mean you've come home to me---you ---

1108

Yes, you old fool, I've come home--

subrey

(embracing her) Meg!

May ne

Well I guess the strike's over. (exits C.)

Abbrey

Q. Meg, you were struck for half of my wage- income didn't you?

Meg

Yes, dear.

Aubrey

all you can have half of what I've got now. money.

Meg

Aubrey---you old ^{big}joker! I'm sorry you lost it all---

Aubrey

I lost a lot, Meg, but I learned one thing---

Meg

What's that?

Aubrey

I just can't get along with out you?

With Meg

Aubrey! (they embrace again)

Edit'n

(enters HQ) Hello, popper!

Subræy

Well, daughter home again huh?

edith

Yes, ded--

Audrey

Well come and hug your old dad (takes them both in his arms) Meg, there was a time when I thought if I could just be successful I'd be happy, but now I don't give a darn about success. I've got you and Edith!

David

(enters C.) Aubrey! Aubrey! It did! It did!

ubrey

It did what?

David

They did It did---we all did.

Aubrey

What the---what's the matter with you?

David

We're rich. The committee changed their minds and they're buying the old power plant.

Aubrey

Oh kiss me I'm going to fly! Whoopie!

Meg

Ohpa, are we rich?

Aubrey

Woman, you tell 'em---and HOW!

David

That's life for you now isn't it?

Aubrey

Well I knew all along my idea was right. I knew from the start I'd be a success. Meg, I want you to put on your hat after while and we're walking down the street to show off. I want to give the laugh to the poor sumps in this burg who called me a failure. Can you imagine 'em---callin' me---Me a failure! Kiss me, Meg. I'm a success. (they embrace)

Edith

Gee, it looks great to see you and mother in each other's arms.

Aubrey

Well, why don't you follow a good example? (looks at David and Edith)

Edith

Oh---a ---dad!

David

Edith---(goes to her whispers in her ear)

Edith

(smiles and nods)

David

(calls off C) Hey Dad Heyes****

Dad

(enters C.) Meh---what is it?

David

Make us a reservation on the train tonight---and listen be sure we are on the side that gets the moonlight!

Dad

All right---dad burn my buttons that does my soulgood---I was just worrying about the railroad---we aint done much business this week. This will kinda help matters along. You say you want the side with the most moonlight---eh?

Edith

Yes---for we're going to start right out making marriage & romance---and romance grows in the moonlight---Oh, David, I'm so happy. I can just see it all now---I can just see the moonlight peeping in through the window, and---

Dad

Listen---now you want to be careful about havin' that moon peepin' through the window?

David

Why?

Dad

Because there is a Man in the moon!